

that my daughter attends. He is the first person in his family to attend college, and his goal is to earn a Ph.D. in engineering and to address our Nation's affordable housing crisis. Today, Eliel encourages young students to pursue careers in science and math.

Eliel is a DACA student. Let me repeat. Eliel is a DACA student. He and his family left Mexico when he was 7 years old to pursue the American Dream through hard work and dedication.

We must ensure that Eliel and hundreds of other hardworking DACA students stay in America, the only home they have known, so that they can also contribute to the greatness of our great country. DACA students are our new Americans.

Let us help our great Nation stay great. Let us do the right thing. Let's give our DACA students and other hardworking taxpayers in our Nation a pathway to citizenship.

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING DO NOT BELONG IN SHACKLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in her formative years, Lena wore turtle-necks and baggy clothes to school every day.

Why did she do so?

To hide the bruises that covered her entire body.

Soon, Lena's abusive foster mother lost custody of her. And when her foster mother lost custody, Lena just ran away. She was 13.

After bolting from the front lawn at the Houston middle school, she ran into a friendly-looking stranger, and that is when she discovered a false sense of comfort in the hands of a dastardly human trafficker. He offered to look after her, protect her, and love her; that was if she made him a little money. And he offered her the one thing she was missing in her 13 years, someone who said they loved her.

Mr. Speaker, love doesn't come with black eyes and bruises, however. The trafficker even promised Lena drugs so she could focus on something else while she was having sex with the buyers of children.

For the next 3 months, Lena would have many different traffickers and many different buyers. She would spend a few months or weeks with them, moving from motel to motel, then she would get scared and try to go back to foster care, and then just disappear again.

Finally, she was arrested after police responded to an internet post advertising sex with children. They arrested her trafficker in the hotel next door. With her help, the police ultimately charged two individuals with forcing a child into prostitution, or human trafficking, as we call it.

Upon her arrest, it was revealed that not only did she have three sexually

transmitted diseases, she was also pregnant.

The problem then, Mr. Speaker, is that Lena had nowhere to go. Authorities found themselves with an abused, traumatized, demoralized trafficking victim, a child, on their hands. Remember, Lena was a victim of crime. She was not a criminal. Children cannot be willing prostitutes under the law.

But there were no resources to put her anywhere, no resources to get her help and the support that she needed. The very limited number of nearby trafficking shelters were all full and there was no place to send her, so she was locked up in the county jail.

Victims of trafficking, Mr. Speaker, do not belong in shackles and orange jumpsuits. They belong in safe, nurturing environments. They deserve to have access to resources and help to get their stolen lives back for them.

How can a victim begin to recover, while a child, languishing in jail?

The justice system failed Lena and many others just like her, but it doesn't have to be this way. Lena deserves justice.

Sitting here in Washington, D.C., there is a victims' fund totaling over \$12 billion. Money in this fund comes from fines and fees imposed on convicted felons, people like deviants who trafficked Lena. Unfortunately, year after year, only a small amount of this money is actually taken out of the fund to help victims. Most of it stays in the fund and is used by appropriators to offset the costs of their pet projects that have nothing to do with victims of crime.

This is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker. The money, remember, is not taxpayer money. It is money that comes from criminals when they are convicted in Federal court, and we should give this money to victims of crime.

Money in the fund should be spent only on what victims like Lena desperately need so that they can get their lives back together and recover from the trafficking abuse they suffered.

Lena and other trafficking victims deserve justice. They deserve the money that is in the fund, and bureaucrats need to quit using that money as an offset for other projects. The victim fund is partially the answer.

Mr. Speaker, this should be spent on victims of crime because no trafficking victim belongs in the shackles of a county jail.

And that is just the way it is.

SENSELESS ACTS OF GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Jonah Min Hwang, another victim of a senseless act of gun violence. Jonah was only 8 years old when he was killed last

week in a drive-by shooting in my home city of Pomona.

Jonah, his parents, and his brother were enjoying dinner hosted by friends of his parents, two schoolteachers, when a bullet ripped through the house and hit Jonah. Crimes like this are heartbreaking.

A talented soccer player, an avid reader who loved superheroes, Jonah was an adopted child from a Taiwanese orphanage just 3 years ago. It eats at your soul to think that such a young child with his whole life ahead of him could be taken so ruthlessly. Perhaps most frustrating is that Jonah's killer is still at large.

When I first heard of Jonah's death, it brought me back to a similar tragedy when I served as mayor of my home city of Pomona. In 2006, little Ethan Esparza was shot and killed while he was playing in his front yard during his birthday party. He would have turned 4 years old.

Ethan's murder shocked our community and was a stark reminder of the violence that plagues our city. Sadly, over 10 years later, we are still fighting those same battles.

The murders of Jonah and Ethan were completely senseless, but they are not rare. In fact, Pomona was recently ranked California's eighth most dangerous city, which doesn't surprise those of us who have seen gangs take ahold of our city.

Our local police department puts their lives on the line every single day to try to keep us safe, and our local officials have made significant investments in law enforcement. During my time as mayor, we implemented gang injunctions to try to get hold of the problem.

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But as the number of guns on the streets continues to rise and ruthless gang members get their hands on these deadly weapons, it often feels like a losing battle. We are alone fighting these battles.

As a matter of fact, today marks the 23rd anniversary of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, better known as the Brady bill, which has blocked more than 3 million people who had no business owning a gun from buying a gun from a federally licensed dealer.

As the new President makes his first address to Congress today, it is especially infuriating that, despite the countless gun-related tragedies occurring across our country, this Congress and this new administration have not taken one single step to reduce gun violence. I have come to this floor before demanding action, and I stand here before you yet again today, Mr. Speaker, to demand action on behalf of Jonah, of Ethan, and of the millions of innocent lives lost.

There are steps that we can take immediately to expand the Brady bill to save lives and make our communities safer:

First, we should close the loophole that allows guns to be sold online or at gun shows without background checks.